

Feeding Children in the Summer

Three options to feed children during the summer:

Local education agencies (LEAs) that operate a summer school program offering regular credit may also extend the services of the school lunch and/or school breakfast programs to attending students. Federal assistance is extended to the LEA through various programs during the summer. It must be understood that federal funds may be used to cover only one of the options offered for lunch and/or breakfast programs. Listed below are the options for feeding children during the summer:

1. **The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP)** If the school site restricts meal services to just summer school students, the summer school only sites must operate under the National School Lunch/School Breakfast Program (NSLP/SBP) regulations. The meals must be recorded in the appropriate category; i.e., free, reduced price, and paid. NSLP/SBP rates of reimbursement will apply. Claims for reimbursement must be submitted via the Web to DESE.
2. **The Seamless Summer Option** is operated under the NSLP/SBP guidelines and is administrated by DESE. The summer sites (area eligible sites) must be located in needy areas where 50 percent or more of the children qualify for free and reduced price school meals. The summer sites (enrolled sites) may also be located in non-needy areas, provided that at least 50 percent of the children enrolled in these sites qualify for free and reduced price school meals. Meal services for summer school sites must also be open to all children (18 years and under) in the community. The meal services cannot be limited to just summer school students. The availability of meals to the children in the community must be advertised. All meals must be served free and reimbursed at the free reimbursement rate of the NSLP/SBP. Claims for reimbursement must be submitted via the Web to DESE.

The purpose of the Seamless Summer Option is to feed all children in low-income areas during the summer months. Pre-approval by the State Agency, prior to operation of each site is required in writing to verify individual site eligibility. Paper applications for site approval are available at www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food. Approval of an area-eligible site is for 5 years. Enrolled site eligibility must be re-determined each year.

3. **The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** is administered by The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). Site eligibility for the SFSP is determined in the same way as for the Seamless Summer Option. The determinations are made by the DHSS and are good for 5 years. Meals may also be served in non-needy areas, provided that at least 50 percent of the children enrolled in the site's food program qualify for free or reduced price school meals. As in the Seamless Summer Option, the meal service must be open to all children (18 years and under) in the community, and the availability of the meals to all children in the community must be advertised. The SFSP regulations and reimbursement rates (which are higher than NSLP/BP rates) apply. New for the 2008: the "lesser of" comparison between actual costs and meals x rates has been eliminated, meaning that schools are guaranteed to receive a higher rate of reimbursement in the SFSP than in the Seamless Summer Option. Schools that have participated in the Seamless Summer Option in the past may complete a user-friendly on-line application with the DHSS for the SFSP, and claims for reimbursement, are submitted via the Web to the DHSS as well. For more information call 888-435-1464.